

Minutes of 26 June meeting of SETQ Committee

Disclosable

Meeting	Agenda Item	Reference No
25/09/09	15	HEFCW/09/75

1 Issue

- 1.1 This paper presents for approval the unconfirmed minutes of the Council's Student Experience, Teaching and Quality Committee (SETQC) held on 26 June 2009.

2 Corporate Planning Implications / Rationale for paper

- 2.1 The SETQC is one of the standing committees of the Council and its purpose is to advise the Council on matters relating to the promotion of teaching excellence in higher education, and the enhancement of the student learning experience. It also undertakes HEFCW's statutory responsibilities to ensure provision is made for assessing the quality of education in higher education institutions (HEIs) for whose activities it provides financial support.

3 Recommendation(s)

- 3.1 The Council is invited to note the unconfirmed minutes of the Student Experience, Teaching and Quality Committee meeting on 26 June 2009.

4 Timing for decisions

- 4.1 There are no timing implications for this paper.

5 Council members' interests

- 5.1 No conflicts of interests have been declared in advance of the meeting.

6 Further information

- 6.1 Contact Dr Cliona O'Neill (Tel 029 2068 2283; E-mail: cliona.oneill@hefcw.ac.uk)

7 Background

- 7.1 The SETQC undertakes HEFCW's statutory responsibilities under the Further and Higher Education Act 1992 in respect of quality assessment.

8 Minutes of the SETQC meeting of 26 June 2009

8.1 The minutes of the June 2009 meeting of the SETQC are available at **Annex A**.

8.2 Members may particularly wish to note the following issues:

- The meeting began with a strategic discussion of Widening Access issues and future directions. The outcomes of that discussion are annexed to the minutes.
- The Committee received the summary of recommendations from the Jones Review, and awaited clarification from the Minister and Council on next steps.
- The National Student Survey results would not be published until the end of September due to technical difficulties, and would therefore be unavailable for students at the time of clearing. Members were disappointed that the NSS had failed to deliver to schedule again, and asked that the Chair of Council write to UCAS, which has the contract for the Unistats website, on behalf of the committee detailing its concerns. They agreed that the results for franchise HE in FE provision should be reported separately in the NSS from 2009/10, and that HEFCW should investigate the logistics of including directly funded HE in FE provision in the survey.
- The Committee noted the first annual report of the Welsh Education and Skills Board, and shared the Board's concerns that a sector-based approach did not meet the broadest needs of the labour market. The committee agreed that the report should inform discussion at its next meeting.
- The next meeting of the committee would begin with a strategic discussion of the engagement of the HE sector with the sector skills councils, employers' needs with regards to graduate skills, and how the HE sector could contribute to addressing the issues.
- Members noted the confidence outcomes of QAA institutional reviews of Swansea University, the University of Glamorgan, Cardiff University and the University of Wales Institute, Cardiff. They also noted the confidence outcome of the overseas audit of the University of Wales at St Petersburg Christian University. They noted that there had been two very positive reviews of directly funded HE in FE institutions.

Members are invited to note the unconfirmed minutes of the Learning and Teaching Committee meeting on 26 June 2009

9 Financial implications

9.1 No immediate financial implications arise out of this paper. However, some of the suggestions made by the Committee with regards to widening access would have financial implications if adopted.

10 Communications implications

- 10.1 There may be press interest arising from items discussed at the Committee meetings, such as the National Student Survey results (item HEFCW/09/CE5 refers).
- 10.2 Quality matters, such as the outcomes of institutional reviews, and reviews of the quality of higher education in other countries of the UK may also generate press interest, particularly when the outcomes are not favourable.
- 10.3 Matters relating to skills are generating press interest as a result of the current economic climate, and emerging Welsh Assembly Government policies.

11 Diversity and Equal Opportunities implications

- 11.1 There are no immediate diversity or equal opportunities implications arising from this paper. However, the terms of reference for the Committee confirm that the specific duties of the Committee include advising the Council on matters relating to learning and teaching in higher education, including widening access to higher education and Welsh medium provision.

12 Risk Assessment

- 12.1 Risks associated with the areas arising in this paper are detailed below:

RISK	ACTION TO ADDRESS RISK
Council is unable to meet its statutory responsibilities regarding quality assurance	The Committee advises Council on its statutory responsibilities in relation to quality assurance, using a subset of membership where appropriate.